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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 127045

FOR AMBASSADORS AND PAOS FROM UNDER SECRETARY GLASSMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/21/18

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [OIIP](#)

SUBJECT: ENCOURAGING CREDIBLE VOICES TO COUNTER VIOLENT
EXTREMISM

CLASSIFIED BY: UNDER SECRETARY JAMES K. GLASSMAN FOR
REASONS 1.4 (B AND D)

11. (C) SUMMARY/ACTION REQUEST: I request Public Affairs Sections at designated posts to report on how posts work with influential host country figures - "credible voices" -- to disseminate and support key U.S. messages on countering violent extremism and other issues of crucial import to our strategic communications goals in your posts. Please refer to the questions in paragraph 5 and report to R and your Bureau PD Office by December 8, 2008. Thank you, James K. Glassman

BEGIN TEXT

12. (C) I was designated by the President to lead the interagency effort in the War of Ideas/strategic communications. The Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication, which I chair, has made excellent progress in the past five months to energize the interagency, develop new models for engagement, and establish new lines of cooperation and funding to get these projects and programs implemented, all with a focus on pushing back against violent ideologies, and providing positive alternatives to those who may be at risk of radicalization.

13. (C) In December 2007, Secretary Rice and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Steve Hadley discussed ways to build counter movements that oppose violent extremism, create space for credible voices that oppose violence and terrorism, and engage the private sector/private actors in creative public diplomacy programs that de-legitimize violence as a political tool, and advance a more positive vision for engagement. Both agreed that this effort needed renewed emphasis and called for a global approach.

14. (SBU) In order to consider how we can most effectively work with host country "credible voices" to advance our agenda, the PCC created a Credible Voices Working Group comprising personnel from the State Department, the Department of Defense, and the intelligence community. For more information, officers can refer to the unclassified Credible Voices Intellipedia page at www.intelink.ic.gov/wiki/Credible_Voices.

15. (C) The Working Group and the PCC will meet in early December to assess how we can best identify and employ credible voices to counter extremist messages, deconstruct extremist arguments, and curb extremist

appeal. To help us give all interagency stakeholders a sense of current conditions in the field, we ask you to tell us how your Embassy Public Affairs Section encourages host country nationals to disseminate, echo, support, or facilitate public messages of interest to us. Among the questions you may wish to address are the following:

- To what extent does your Country Team work together to produce and manage a unified contact list/contact management system?
- To what extent do credible and influential host country individuals and institutions publicly support our messaging efforts in countering violent extremism?
- What is the impact of these individuals and institutions on public opinion and government policy in your host country?
- How and to what extent do you encourage them to speak out?
- How do you identify and cultivate individuals you believe can serve as credible voices?
- What sort of list of credible voices do you maintain now, and how many names are on that list?
- What type of person or sectors of society are the most influential credible voices in your host society?
- How do you work with other Embassy Sections in these efforts?
- What traditional Public Diplomacy programs and products do you use in your efforts to identify and encourage credible voices?
- What additional support can/should Washington provide in these efforts?
- Please feel free to address any issues or concerns not covered by these questions.

16. (C) I realize that many of us in public diplomacy are not used to thinking of our contacts in terms of "credible voices." But since the early days of USG-organized public diplomacy programs, we have always sought to use our array of programs and the skills of our public diplomacy professionals in the field to understand, engage, inform, and influence foreign publics in ways favorable to U.S. interests, by identifying and cultivating key influencers in host societies. As we continue to enhance our intellectual arsenal in the War of Ideas, I solicit your experiences and views to ensure that our discussions in Washington are grounded in the reality of your experience in the field, and ask for your active participation in this process.

17. (C) I regret the short turn-around time, but I would appreciate receiving your input by Monday, December 8, 2008. Thank you.

RICE